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— LIZ HARFULL

“What I love most about my choice of coming home to run the farm was the challenge to improve the farm, to breed better cows that produced more and to improve the pastures,” Jan says. “I am patient, continue to want to learn and have a goal to leave the farm in good order environmentally.”

All of them believe farming women contribute significantly to Australia’s agricultural industry – even if much of their contribution stays hidden or unrecognised by most outsiders.

“Most women on farms do an awful lot but they

do not say much to anyone about their efforts,” Jan says. “They, of course, look after the children and run the home, they often do all the book work – and there is heaps of that – we chase after parts for broken machinery. Most farmers’ wives help with the day-to-day running of the farm as much as they can although lots of women cannot be as closely involved in the farm until their children are older and they have more time.”

SA farmer Catherine Bird, who took control of her 1000ha Willalooka property after her first marriage crumbled, instigated a shift towards organic cattle farming practices.

She says the effect of women’s nurturing instinct will pay dividends in maintaining our nation’s food-producing capacity for future generations.

“I believe we want to naturally take care of the land rather than just use it for income,” Catherine says. “I love the fact that I’m producing a healthier option for health-conscious customers and I can sell my produce knowing I have tried my hardest to provide an ethically raised and grown nutritionally superior product.

“Women generally want the land to be here for our children and our children’s children and so on.

“And because we think of more than one thing at once we can imagine and plan a broader approach in taking care of it.”

An appreciation of the women’s ability to build a vibrant future for themselves and their family, despite many of their personal circumstances being coloured with adversity, resonated with Harfull as she wrote about their lives, she says.

“The way all of them tackled challenges and the wisdom they gained in the process is truly inspiring,” Harfull says.

Documenting the women’s stories was part of reconnecting urban Australia with those living on the land. “Not that many generations ago most families had relatives or friends on the land, and they could at least visit occasionally to gain a sense of what farming is about,” Harfull says. “But that is no longer the case.

“I get the sense that many city dwellers are increasingly aware of this and would like to reconnect but they just don’t have the opportunity.

“Maybe the stories of these women will help in some small way to give people an understanding of the realities of farming, and not just the fuzzy, golden nostalgic images either that are often used in advertising.”

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**INSPIRATIONAL:** Nan Bray, Keelen Mailman, Mary Naisbitt, Jan Raleigh, Catherine Bird with daughter Scarlett, 4, Susan Chisholm, Lynette Rideout-Keanelly with son Robert, 5 months, and Cecily Cornish. **Picture:** James Elsbey

**COVER DETAILS:** Farmer Catherine Bird with daughter Scarlett, 4, and author Liz Harfull at Stirling. **Picture:** James Elsbey

## sunday WHAT'S ON

### LEISURE ACTIVITIES



#### ABOARD THE BIG BOAT DOLPHIN EXPLORER

**SUNDAY 15/04**

2 hours, 11.30am & 2.00pm

\$8 adults \$6 child,  
Inc lunch \$18 adults \$14 child

#### SCHOOL HOLIDAYS MON 16/4 to SAT 20/4

12pm daily, \$8 adults \$6 child,  
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**13 AIRCRAFT ON DISPLAY**  
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**TODAY 12.30 & 3pm**  
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Rolls Royce, Merlyn, MKIII, Pratt & Whitney 1340, Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah IX, Lycoming 540, Gnome Rotary, Armstrong Siddeley Lynx, GTC85-72 Turbine, Sausage sizzle, raffle  
Model static aircraft display  
Helicopter Joyflights over the Port.  
(subj. to weather conditions)  
**Doors Open 9:30am**  
**Adm. Ad. \$12, U/12 \$6**  
**NO CONCESSIONS**  
**Ph 8240 1230**



#### DOLPHIN CRUISES

**on Port Princess**  
**2 Hour Dolphin Cruise**  
Sun 15/4 departs 11am  
Cost Adult \$8, Children \$6 p/p  
Lunch Available  
**1½ Hour Dolphin Cruises**  
Sun 15/4 dep 1.30 & 3.30pm  
Cost Adult \$8, Children \$6 p/p  
**MOTHERS DAY LUNCH**  
2½ hrs Sun 13/5 dep 12 noon  
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**MX & Enduro Dirtbike Ride Day**  
**Solos & Sidecars Sun**  
Hosted by Quadriders SA  
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### RAILCAR EXCURSIONS

\*\*\*THE STRATHLINK\*\*\*  
**Saturday 21st April 2012.**  
**BRILL RAILCAR** trip from **Goolwa to Strathalbyn.**  
The **STEAM** hauled Cockle Train from Victor Harbor and Pt. Elliot connects.

**\*SOUTHERN HILLS SPECIAL\***  
**Saturday 28th April 2012**  
**BRILL RAILCAR** trip from **Victor Harbor to Mt. Barker**

**\*\*BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL\*\***  
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**Enq. & Bkgs: 1300 655 991.**  
**Tickets also available at South Coast Stations.**  
[www.steamranger.org.au](http://www.steamranger.org.au)

### ADVERTISING FEATURE

#### SALES

**ANTIQUE & ESTATE QUALITY FURNITURE**  
Including chests of drawers always available  
SAT/SUN/MON. 10.30 - 5.30  
**Stapleton Antiques, 183 Unley Rd. Cnr. Edmund Ave.**

### FASHION & STREET WAREHOUSE SALE

**Fox, Lonsdale, Elwood, Lee, Wrangler & more!**  
**ALL BELOW RETAIL PRICE!**

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#### MARKETS

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**OPEN TODAY 11AM - 3PM**  
**441 Cross Rd, Edwardstown Ph. 8371 4111**

### GILLES STREET MARKET

ADELAIDE'S PREMIER FASHION & DESIGN MARKET  
**TODAY, April 15<sup>th</sup> 10am - 4pm**  
91 Gilles St Adelaide  
**NEXT MARKET:** Sun. 20<sup>th</sup> May  
[www.gillesstreetmarket.com.au](http://www.gillesstreetmarket.com.au)

### URAILDA MARKET

**INSTITUTE HALL**  
**THIS SUNDAY 10 AM - 3 PM**  
Apples, Veggies, Plants, Salvias Honey, Cards, Wheat Bags, Quilts Scarves, Crafts & Refreshments  
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